

**CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

18 February 2016

WRITTEN UPDATES

Agenda Item 10 15/01953/OUT Land N of Southfield Farm, Weston-on-the-Green

- Following the publication of the committee agenda, the appeal decision in respect of a proposal for up to 51 dwellings at Chesterton was issued. This decision deals with similar issues to those raised in respect of items 10 and 12 on the agenda, which are outline applications for residential development at Weston-on-the-Green and Milcombe. The appeal decision is yet another welcome endorsement of the Council's ability to demonstrate an up-to-date 5 year housing land supply, and places the Council in a strong position to resist inappropriate and unsustainable development in the rural areas. It also endorses the amount of development proposed in relation to the size and relative sustainability of the village as a relevant factor to be taken into account when deciding whether a proposal is acceptable in principle and a sustainable distribution of the rural areas allocation under Policy Villages 2 of the Cherwell Local Plan. However it does not mean the Council can refuse development at the Category A villages solely on the basis that the Council has a 5 year housing land supply; the Council must consider each proposal on its own merits and must be able to demonstrate that the proposal in question causes unacceptable harm.

In the case of Weston-on-the-Green, the amount of development proposed when considered with the development already committed at Weston-on-the-Green under Policy Villages 2 is 46 dwellings. This is considerably less than that at Chesterton, which would have been in excess of 100 dwellings had the appeal proposal for 51 dwellings been allowed. In the case of Milcombe, although a development of 29 dwellings has taken place relatively recently, this pre-dates the adoption of the Cherwell Local Plan 2015 Part 1 and no development has yet taken place or been committed at Milcombe that would contribute to the rural areas allocation under Policy Villages 2. In this context, officers remain of the view that the proposals are, on balance, an appropriate amount of development that is proportionate to the relative sustainability of the villages, and so in accordance with the Local Plan strategy for distributing housing growth in the rural areas.

Furthermore, unlike the Chesterton and Kirtlington appeal decisions, officers consider that the proposals at Milcombe and Weston-on-the-Green do not result in any significant other harm (for example in highway safety, visual amenity or landscape terms), such that the proposals could be considered unacceptable for other reasons.

In conclusion therefore, having carefully considered the appeal decision at Chesterton, your officers' recommendation to approve in respect of items 10 and 12 on the agenda is unchanged.

- **CDC BUSINESS SUPPORT UNIT** – It is estimated that this development of 26 houses has the potential to attract New Homes Bonus of approximately £189,654 over 6 years under current arrangements for the Council, with an additional sum paid of £280 per affordable home